



CONGRESSMAN HENRY A. WAXMAN NEWS

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WAXMAN TO HEAD HUMAN RIGHTS GROUP ON MOSCOW VISIT

Congressman Henry A. Waxman has been selected to head the Human Rights Group of an official Congressional Leadership Delegation which will visit both the Soviet Union and Soviet Armenia next week.

The Leadership Delegation is scheduled to meet with high-level Soviet officials both in Moscow and Leningrad. Waxman, a veteran of the struggle for Soviet Jewry has indicated that emigration will be at the top of his list of subjects for discussion.

He said,

"In 1979 over 50,000 Jews were allowed to leave the Soviet Union. Over the last few years, this great flow has come to a virtual halt. I want to know why. Our human rights group has substantial information indicating that there are still tens-of-thousands Jews who very much want to leave. Recent official Soviet statements insist that all those who wanted to leave have already done so. We must reconcile these blatant contradictions."

Waxman said, "The Delegation led by Rep. Thomas S. Foley has assigned "tremendous importance" to the discussion of every phase of a bilateral nuclear freeze.

"We want the Russians to know what we in Congress are doing to end the arms race. We want to learn from them not only about official government proposals, but also, about the independent Soviet peace movement.

We are deeply disturbed at reports from Russians, now living in the West, of government harassment of the independent movement. One of the movement leaders, Sergei Batovrin, is now in the United States. He reports harsh persecution of Soviet peace activists who seek contacts with the West and wish to work outside government control."

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